

A 4477 ee. 33.
S E R M O N

Preach'd on

November 22. 1709.

BEING THE

Day of Thanksgiving

FOR THE

SUCCESSSES of the last Campaign.

By THOMAS MASTERS.

L O N D O N;

Printed for John Baker at Mercers-Chaple in
Cheapside. M. DCC. X.



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P S A L M CXXVI. 3.

The Lord hath done great Things for us, whereof we are glad.

THESE Words are part of the Praise which the holy Psalmist, in the name of the Church of *Israel*, offer'd up to God for their amazing Deliverance from the sore and heavy Captivity of *Babylon*, under which they groan'd, and had for a long time waited and pray'd for Deliverance from, but all to no purpose : for Almighty God did seem to be deaf and inexorable to them, as if he had quite forsaken and deserted them, and on purpose had caus'd them to fall into the hands of such cruel and merciless Adversarys, to scourge them for their Sins and Disloyalty to him, to pull down their Pride and vain Confidence, and to render them odious and contemptible to the Infidels, in making them their Slaves for ever.

'Tis not improbable, but that the Church of *Israel* might be under some dismal Apprehensions of this nature, when thro distrust and diffidence of the Divine Promise and Assistance she bitterly bewails herself: Psal. 77. 7, 8, 9. *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his Mercy clean gone for ever? and doth his Promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath God in Anger shut up his tender Mercies?* The Severity of her Yoke, and Straitness of her Chains, together with the unlikely Prospect of a speedy Deliverance from them, had made her as restless and impatient under them, as if the moment of her Sufferings had been an Eternity : and under this doleful apprehension she seems to be cast into desperate Sadness and Despair, and mourns as one whose State was incurable, and who had no more Inclination to praise the Lord, but hung their Harps upon the Willows, in token of extreme Grief, as a People abandon'd

don'd by the Almighty, and given up intirely to be wasted and consum'd by destructive Captivity. In this disconsolate State, who can behold God's *Israel* without a Commotion of Spirit? And yet who can forbear adoring the Divine Justice, for vindicating it self against a sinful People!

Who, that knew the Wonders of God's Love to his People, in the remarkable Instances thereof, cou'd behold them in this deplorable Condition without Astonishment? and without saying, O *Israel*! where is now thy Beauty and Strength, and the Goodliness of thy Tents and Tabernacles, so greatly celebrated and prais'd; the one for its Loveliness, and the other for its mighty Acts in subduing the Nations round about thee? Once thou wert so admir'd and fear'd, that all Nations courted thy Alliance and Friendship, and dreaded thy Terror; but now thou art the Scorn and Contempt of all, and art as much despis'd as then fear'd, and condemn'd as then admir'd. But behold the Goodness of God which never fails his People! Tho *Israel* be in this distress'd Condition, and cannot possibly rescue her self; yet the Almighty can: And to convince his chosen People of his Affections towards them, and of his Care over them, when they least thought of Deliverance, and could not expect it as Cases then stood, without hoping against hope, even then did he miraculously bring it about by his sole Power, and did it so effectually in melting the Heathen Emperor into Compassion towards them, that he not only out of Kindness and Generosity frankly gave them their Liberty, but also restor'd them all the Spoils which had been taken from them, viz. the Treasure of the Lord's House, which consisted in Vessels of Gold and Silver, to the number of five thousand and seven hundred, *Ezra* 1. 11. This sudden unexpected Deliverance did so greatly surprize them, that they suspected the reality of it, and look'd upon it as no more than the mere Delusion of a Dream: So the Psalmist expresses it in the Verses foregoing our Text, *When the Lord turn'd again the Captivity of Sion, we were like them that dream*; q. d. When the Report of this marvellous

marvellous Mercy first reach'd our Ears, and we saw the amazing Change, we were so greatly astonish'd that we cou'd scarcely believe our Senses, but thought it only to be a Delusion of our Fancies. And when they were a little recover'd out of their agreeable Surprise, and saw the reality of their Deliverance, which they at first suspected; when they saw that their Chains were loos'd, their Captivity ended, their Treasure restor'd, and their Liberty recover'd, then presently they sing and are glad, and offer up grateful Praises to their Deliverer; then it was that *their Mouths were fill'd with Laughter, and their Tongues with Singing; and then they said among the Heathen, The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.*

In treating of these Words, I shall,

- I. Consider in general what those great things are which God does for his Church and People in the way of Providence, and which are ascrib'd to him as their only Author.
- II. Shall particularly consider the Mercies of God to us.
- III. The Motive this is to Joy; and so apply it.

I. Let us consider in general what those great things are which God doth for his Church and People in the way of Providence, which are ascrib'd to him as their only Author.

By those great things we are to understand, either those things he immediately effects by his Power and Agency, without the intervention and interposition of any other; or those he brings to pass by the instrumentality of others; both of these carry the Stamp and Signature of the Almighty; and tho his Power and Goodness be more visibly and eminently display'd and conspicuous in the execution of one than in the other, yet both of them are his Works, and are equally ascrib'd to him as the Author thereof. Now,

1. Those things he immediately effects for us by his sole Power, without the intervention of human Agents,
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are denominated Creation, and miraculous Preservation and Deliverances. These are things that are amazingly great, that are infinitely above the capacity of the Creature, and apparently discover the Finger of God : for to create, to produce something out of nothing, to give Form, Life and Beauty to dead Matter, to indue a Clod of Clay with Sense, to invest it with Faculties of Reason and Discourse, and to deliver out of the greatest and most imminent Danger, against the stream and course of Nature, when to human appearance there is no possible way of escape, is the peculiar Work of God alone, and immediately effected by him, without the Assistance and Concurrence of other Agents. But not to pass by this without any further notice, let us look into the Holy Scriptures, and there we shall find some Instances of this nature ; which how truly great and wonderful they are, we shall be able to judg, when once we have duly consider'd them.

The first Instance I shall produce of this kind, which the Scripture furnishes us with, shall be the Deliverance of *Israel* out of the *Egyptian* Bondage, where they groan'd, and had for ever groan'd, had not the Almighty miraculously interpos'd, and brought them out by a strong hand ; first by his Plagues he sent among them, and then last of all by drowning the *Egyptians* in the *Red Sea*.

This was all purely the Lord's Doings, without the *Israelites* least Assistance ; for *Israel* at this time was so very weak, that scarcely a Sword was to be found among them : and they were so apprehensive of their imminent danger when they beheld the *Egyptians* behind, and a vast Sea before them, that they concluded their Ruin was inevitable : therefore their Hearts melted, their Courage fail'd them, and they were at their wits end, fearing and believing they cou'd no way escape the *Egyptian* Fury ; but should soon feel the Terror of it in their Destruction. The Views of this urg'd them to exclaim bitterly against *Moses*, saying, *Because there were no Graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the Wilderness ? Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry*

us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the Word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? for it had been better for us to have serv'd the Egyptians, than to have died in the Wilderness. Exod. 14. 10, 11, 12.

Surely they apprehended their Danger unavoidable, when out of the bitterness of their Souls they utter'd these words; which was a manifest murmuring against God, as well as against his Servant *Moses*: for which he might have severely rebuk'd them, by saying, What mean these loud and ill-tim'd Exclamations? What reason have you for your Fears, Murmurs and Complaints? What Evil is that you now endure, which is so much worse than your Bondage in *Egypt*, that you repent your Deliverance out of it? Hath not God clearly manifested himself to be with you, by his Signs, his Plagues, and Wonders in *Egypt*? Why then tempt you him by your Murmurs and undutiful Behaviour towards him? If God hath promis'd to save you by his own Power, and will assuredly give you the Land of Promise, then give him liberty to bring it about his own way, and in his own due time; save your Murmurs and Complaints to the last, until you see by the issue that God will prove the unfaithful God, as your Fears and Distrustfulness do suggest.

Moses says nothing to discourage, but endeavours to hearten them against their Fears, by assuring them that their Deliverance is at hand, which they should quickly see verify'd in their miraculous Deliverance; and therefore exhorts them to be patient and quiet, to *stand still and see the Salvation of the Lord*: which with amazement they beheld, when in a few moments they saw themselves perfectly deliver'd from the Terror and Fury of an *Egyptian* Host, and secure in the favour of God, without striking a Stroke, or so much as lifting up their hands in their own Defence; and then it was that their Fears were turn'd into Triumphs, and their Murmurs into Praises: and then they joyfully sing, *The Lord is my Strength and Song, and he is become my Salvation, Exod. 15. 2.*

Another

Another instance of this nature we have in the *Israelites* Travels thro the Wilderness to the Land of *Canaan* : where tho the *Israelites* were free from the *Egyptian* Bondage and Tyranny, and had now no rigorous Taskmasters to impose upon them, nor an arm'd Host pursuing and threatning them ; yet they were in as bad a Case, as being invaded by Famine and Want : for the Wilderness was fruitless, there was no Vintage nor Harvest, neither were there any Inhabitants or Neighbours (the Wild Beast excepted) to yield them any Supply. All was wild and waste to them, it would afford nothing that was conducive to maintain and prolong their miserable Lives: which a little before were miraculously deliver'd and rescu'd from a raging Sea, a furious Enemy, and a cruel Bondage.

Many fruitless days Journies they take to find Food and Refreshment, and to their great Sorrow nothing but Barrenness and Leanness appear. This distracts and terrifies them, because it represented to them a miserable Prospect of Famine and Nakedness, which they knew would bring an inevitable, tho lingering Death. This Calamity to them was worse than the Bondage of *Egypt*, and they reckon'd it far more grievous and insupportable, as appears from their Murmurs which they renew against *Moses* and *Aaron*, when they cry'd, saying, *Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the Land of Egypt, when we sat by the Flesh-Pots, and when we did eat Flesh to the full ! for ye have brought us forth into this Wilderness, to kill this whole Assembly with Hunger.* *Exod.* 16. 2, 3. This was certainly a day of unspeakable Trouble and Adversity to *Israel*, when they had no Food nor Prospect of any, and when they were daily threatned with the devouring Teeth of Famine ; an Enemy so very terrible and frightful, that none could be greater. But Oh the Goodness of God that is manifested in their miraculous Preservation ! He sends them Food from above to sustain them ; what the Wilderness is defective in, he resolves the Heavens shall make good, and so spreads a Table of Refreshment for his People upon the Earth every morning : and not only
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so, but he also preserv'd their very Clothes, *that they wax'd not old*, Deut. 8. 4. After this wonderful manner did Almighty God support and preserve his People for the space of forty years in the Wilderness, until they came into the Land of Promise, which abounded with plenty of all things, and where they might have an easy Supply for all their Wants. And all this was brought about by the immediate and miraculous Power of God, without the intervention of any human Agent.

Another Instance of this miraculous Preservation the Scripture furnishes us with, is, the Deliverance of King *Hezekiah* from the Fury and Rage of *Sennacherib* and his mighty Host, when he invaded *Judah*, and block'd up *Jerusalem*; having already made himself Master of all the fenc'd Cities of *Judah*, and nothing but *Jerusalem* was the Obstacle to his universal Conquest of that Country.

Hezekiah, and those with him in *Jerusalem*, must needs be wonderfully terrify'd at the great Successes of the Enemy, that they should so quickly subdue all the strong Cities, and be now on their full march to compleat their Conquest in taking *Jerusalem* also. In this City he shut himself up, not daring without God's special Commission to oppose their farther Designs by offering them Battel. He was too wise a Prince to expose himself and People to the Rage of such mighty Numbers, as were approaching him with all speed upon the Wings of Victory: He looks upon such an Attempt as rash and presumptuous, which in all appearance would prove his entire Overthrow; therefore is he upon the reserve, he finds he can do no good with them himself, he therefore relies upon the Lord his Rock. He knew 'twas in vain to attack them with his Sword and Bow, he therefore will fight them at his Prayers, by calling in the Succours of Heaven for his Assistance; and doth patiently wait the Issue thereof, which answer'd beyond expectation: for no sooner hath he ended his Prayer, but the Prophet *Isaiab* is sent to him with this welcome Message, saying, *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, That which thou hast pray'd to me against the King*

of Assyria, I have heard; this is the Word that the Lord hath spoke concerning him, The Virgin the Daughter of Sion hath despis'd thee, and laugh'd thee to Scorn; the Daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her Head at thee, 2 Kings 19. 19, 20, &c. But how shall this come to pass, that these Daughters of Sion and Jerusalem, who are now trembling for fear, and expect the worst, shall triumph and laugh at the uncircumcis'd Assyrians, their proud insulting Foes? They shall do it by means of the Lord of Hosts, and that very quickly too, as to their great Wonder and Joy they shall behold. The Assyrians are now arriv'd at the utmost bounds of their Conquest, they have run the Chain of providential Permission to the uttermost link; and tho they strain hard to stretch it one degree farther, in the reduction of Jerusalem also, yet their Attempt is vain, as the Issue will discover: for tho they are confident and secure, and defy the Almighty, and resolve to carry it in despite of Heaven and Earth, yet their Blasphemy and presumptuous Arrogance shall cost them dear. Had they been content with their other Conquest, without pushing at this; or had they not defy'd and blasphem'd the Lord of Hosts, and glory'd in their own Strength, they might have prosper'd, and return'd triumphantly home with a prodigious Spoil of Treasure and Captives; especially when for the Sins of Israel God had call'd them in to scourge them. But their Contempt and Defiance of the God of Heaven shall prove their Overthrow: for tho Israel themselves cannot accomplish it, yet the Almighty Jehovah can, and he did it so suddenly and effectually, that in that very night he slew One Hundred and Fourscore and Five Thousand by an Angel, which he sent into the Camp of the Assyrians; and says the Divine Story, at the opening of the morning there were seen nothing but dead Corps, 2 Kings 19. 35. At this miraculous Destruction of the Assyrians, the Word of the Lord was made good to the Daughters of Sion and Jerusalem, who unquestionably with wonderful Speed and Joy exchange their Sackcloth and Ashes for goodly Attire, their Fears for Security, and their
Tears

Tears and Terrors for Comfort and Joy ; and do now as much despise, laugh, and shake their Heads at their miraculous Overthrow, as before they did tremble at their Terror. This is also one of the wonderful things which God brings to pass by his sole efficiency, without the intervention of second Causes. But then,

2. There are great things also which God does for his Church and People by the Instrumentality of others ; as when by his Blessing and Assistance, with Means, he brings about his Peoples Deliverance. 'Tis He that gives Wisdom to concert, and Presence of Mind, and Courage and Strength to execute ; and hereby a few manytimes defeat a numerous Army. Several Instances of this nature Scripture and Experience furnish us with, which the shortness of time will not permit us to mention : But so much we must say, that such amazing Victories as these must needs be obtain'd by the special assistance of Heaven ; and not only such astonishing Successes as these, but those also which are gain'd where the Numbers are equal, and where there is no visible Superiority or Advantage on either side ; for there is no Victory without his determination. He is the God of Battels, on whom the Success of all things depends : He girdeth with strength to Battel, or intimidates and dispirits mens Hearts ; 'tis He that makes some mens Courage superior to all Dangers and Difficulties they are to struggle with, and makes them encounter them with a Spirit and Bravery above Mortals ; and doth at the same time terrify others in their imaginary places of Security. Some he leads on with Triumph, while he terrifies others with Fears ; some he emboldens to attempt what is most hazardous without any visible Distraction, while he takes away the Hearts and Spirits of others, and hereby disables them from defending themselves. To some he gives steddiness of Counsel, to others Confusion : and to some he gives Wisdom to contrive, and Strength to execute, and prospers all their Designs ; while he confounds others, and renders all their Projects abortive. One way or other, by his over-ruling Providence every Victory is won, he being

the chief Agent who determines the Issues of all things : and therefore he cautions proud Princes, not to boast of a sufficiency of Wealth, Wisdom and Might, for the execution of their own Projects ; as if by their Wisdom, Soldiers and Treasure, they could infallibly assure themselves of Success in all their Enterprizes ; saying, *Let not the rich Man glory in his Riches, neither let the mighty Man glory in his Might, neither let the wise Man glory in his Wisdom : but let him that glorieth, glory in this, That he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exerciseth Loving-Kindness, Judgment and Righteousness in the Earth,* Jer. 9. 23, 24. 'Tis abundantly evident that nothing can save and keep in safety but the Almighty. Saith the Holy Psalmist, *There is no King sav'd by the multitude of an Host ; a mighty Man is not deliver'd by much strength, a Horse is a vain thing for Safety, neither shall he deliver by his great strength : our Help is only in the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth,* Psal. 33. 16. And it hath been the general Judgment and Practice of the Church and People of God, from the early days of Religion, to confess and own as much, and to celebrate his Praise for it. And now,

II. Let us consider the great things in particular which God hath done for us, to excite our Joy and Praise as the Day invites, that we may be dispos'd in this blessed Exercise to sing with the Psalmist, *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.*

To draw as perfect a Parallel with the Psalmist as the Case will admit, permit me to lead you back to the happy Revolution, and to recapitulate some of the Wonders of Providence we receiv'd therein, and since down to this very day, which come little or nothing short of *Israel's* Deliverance out of *Babylon*. Concerning the feeble and sickly State of the Protestant Church in general throughout *Great Britain* before the Revolution, perhaps few here present are ignorant. 'Tis true, and prais'd be the Almighty for it, we were not, like the *Jews*, Captives in a strange Land ; but how near we were to Ruin and Destruction, 'tis easy to judg, when we saw
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the Incroachment of the Crown upon the Liberties of the People, and the King's dispensing with the Penal Laws, chiefly in favour of the avow'd Enemies of all Protestants: When we saw the Papists not only tolerated, but encourag'd, and at the Helm; courted and invited from all Places to come among us: When the University-Schools were seiz'd contrary to Law, and given to such as would effectually poison our Youths, and unprinciple them in the Foundation and Principles of our Holy Religion: When the Bishops for a frivolous Pretence were clapt up in the *Tower*; when a spurious Prince was impos'd upon us, and a standing Army at hand, ready to execute what the Enemies of our Religion and Country were apt to persuade the King was consistent with his Honour and Safety. Then was our Religion, Lives and Properties, with every thing that was dear and truly valuable to us, in great peril and jeopardy: Then we were in an unhealthy State, a declining Church, and sinking Nation; and had not the then Prince of *Orange* (whose Memory will be always precious to every good Protestant) out of a generous Compassion to us, undertaken that hazardous and tremendous Attempt to rescue us, we might never have been rais'd more, but have been the Prey, as we were the Hatred, of our inveterate and irreconcilable Enemies. But God in Mercy to us rais'd up this pious Prince, to be our *Joshua* under himself, to frustrate the Designs of the malicious Papists, and to scatter those Clouds which threatned us a-new with *Marian* Days; and hereby secur'd unto us every thing which we highly priz'd, and was truly valuable, and which was in the utmost danger of Shipwreck. This matchless Mercy and Deliverance, by the marvellous Providence of God, was so suddenly and wonderfully brought about, contrary to our deserts and greatest expectation, in turning the Hearts of the whole Nation (I mean of the major part) towards him, as of one Man, that we saw our selves deliver'd and establish'd, and our Foes scatter'd and dispers'd as it were in a moment, with the shedding of little or no Blood; the sight of which did

did no less amaze than please us : So very swiftly and miraculously was it accomplish'd, that we may very well allude to what the Psalmist speaks concerning the Deliverance of the captive Church of *Israel*, *When the Lord turn'd again the Captivity of Sion, we were like them that dream.* 'Twas so very sudden and wonderful, that we could scarce believe our own Eyes and Ears that we were deliver'd, when we were securely establish'd in the happy Revolution.

This was the first and foundation Mercy to all that hath succeeded ever since. Immediately after follow'd the Reduction of *Ireland*, which produc'd as pleasing, as wonderful a Revolution in Church and State ; where we hope the Protestant Churches are now at rest, and perfectly secure from all the Attempts of their restless Adversaries. And after this what a multitude of Mercies and Deliverances attended us throughout the whole Reign of that blessed Prince (King *William* of Glorious Memory) both at Home and Abroad ? And what a black train of Attempts, Designs and cursed Assassination-Plots were hatch'd and carry'd on to deprive us of the Life of that excellent Prince, in order to pave a way for the abdicated Prince's return, and to introduce Popery and Slavery among us ; and some of them too set on foot by pretended Protestants, as if they had misgivings of our glorious Deliverer, and were persuaded that a *Roman* Head would suite best with a Protestant Body ; and that the most likely way to preserve the Gospel-Church, was to subject it to a Popish Government ? But by the good Providence of God all their Designs were blasted, and receiv'd a fatal Blow : They were permitted to behold the Conception, which to be sure not only pleas'd them, but rais'd their hopes and expectations to the highest pitch ; but were quickly mortify'd at the monstrous Birth, when they saw that instead of a Creature to support their Cause and Hearts, their Labour, Prayers and Cost produc'd nothing but a Scorpion to sting and torment them ; it serv'd only to aggravate their Misery, and hasten their own shameful Destruction. So, O Lord, let all the Designs of the E-

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enemies of the Protestant Interest perish, rather than suffer such Persons pernicious Designs to prosper in the Downfal of it ! And by the blessed Protection of Almighty God, our late good Sovereign, in despite of all the Plots and Designs of his secret and open Enemies, after he had often triumph'd over his Enemies by his victorious Arms, at last died in Peace ; and left us, prais'd be God for it, in the secure possession of all that was valuable to us : for which God hath been prais'd, and I hope always will, as long as the remembrance thereof remains.

But to come down to the present glorious Reign ; a Reign so remarkable for wonderful Works and Mercies, that History it self (the Sacred only excepted) cannot parallel ! What a number of signal and astonishing Victories hath Providence blest us with within the compass of a few Years ? How often hath he made us triumph over our Enemies, in Battels won, in Cities recover'd, and Countries sav'd ? God hath made us oppress the great Oppressor, and constrain'd the great Enemy of the Christian World (who once pretended to give Laws to the Universe, and presum'd upon a sufficiency of Might to execute them) to sue for Peace. Every Year since this bloody doubtful War commenc'd, we have receiv'd some special Marks of the Divine Favour, Presence and Approbation, in the annual Songs of Praise he hath put into our Mouths, for Mercies worthy to be commemorated, recorded and admir'd by grateful Creatures.

One Year he invites us to Praise for a matchless Victory, for an Army slaughter'd, and for an Army taken, viz. at the memorable Battel of *Hochstet*. Not one Year has pass'd during the course of her Majesty's Reign in this present War, without some signal proof of the Divine Favour, in doing some great things for us, that have merited a publick and national Thanksgiving : And among the number of those great things God hath done for us, the Union deserves to be rankt ; for it seems to be a Work peculiarly Divine, and the Accomplishment thereof (as such) is owing to the Blessing

sing of Heaven : for who but God could cure that implacable Hatred and Aversion that was settled in the Hearts and Minds of one Nation against another, but He who has the Hearts of all in his hand, and turns them as he does the Rivers of Waters ? Who could remove the Prejudices, Fears and Jealousies that were mutually engendred on both sides, which expos'd them to intestine Broils, and perfectly reconcile them, and induce them to forget and forgive all Injuries, and melt them into Love and Friendship ; but the Almighty, who subdues the Hearts of all Men, and over-rules them for his own Purpose and Praise ? In vain was this great Work attempted in former Reigns, because God suspended his Blessing till now, on purpose reserving it for one of the great Works which shall grace this present Reign ; which her Majesty having a pious sense of, deservedly esteems as one of the greatest Blessings that hath attended her. And methinks 'tis strange, that any within the Verge of the Protestant Inclosure in *Great Britain*, who pray and wait for the coming of Christ's Kingdom, and wish Prosperity and Increase of Grace to the Body and Church of Christ in general, should be of a contrary Opinion ; and be so far from liking it, and being thankful for it, as to traduce it, as tho' 'twere both dishonourable and infamous. Good Manners, if not Charity, methinks should have constrain'd such to have bridled their Tongues, and at least made them silent, tho' they could not approve ; and not so impudently fly in the face of the Government, as if the Union were inconsistent and prejudicial to the present Establishment, and really destructive to the Protestant Interest in general.

I should abundantly exceed the limits of my time, should I enumerate the yearly Successes Heaven has favour'd us with. However I must not forget the great things God hath done for us this last Campaign, which we are met together to bless the Almighty for. We are not to offer up Praise for a single, but for repeated Mercies, for the Reduction of two important Cities by Sieges, and for a compleat and astonishing Victory.

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The first in order of time was *Tournay*, a Place of vast Consequence, and incredible Strength; not only upon the account of its prodigious Fortifications, which consisted in the number and strength of its Outworks and Citadel; but also in the number of its subterraneous Cavities and Mines, which made the approach of it unspeakably dangerous: yet notwithstanding all the vigorous resistance of the Garison, and the badness of the Weather, which mightily incommoded the Besiegers, 'twas in a short time surrendred, even in the sight of the Enemy, who stood and gaz'd at this Misfortune, but durst not attempt its Relief. For this our Praises are due, and for this let us heartily and devoutly sing, *The Lord hath done great Things for us, whereof we are glad.*

The next thing that gives occasion for our Praise, was the signal Victory near *Mons*, after an obstinate and hard-fought Battel. This cost the Allies much Blood, but it gain'd them no less Honour. After the Loss of *Tournay* the Enemy desir'd, if possible, to prevent the further Progress of our victorious Arms, and ignorant of the next Place design'd for Conquest, take possession of a Wood, where they strongly lay intrench'd to cover their own Territories from the Invasion of the Allies. The Advantages of their Situation, and their numerous Intrenchments made them flatter themselves that they were sufficiently secure from all Attacks: But notwithstanding all these Advantages, thro the undaunted Courage and Resolution of our Generals and Soldiers, who attack'd them with almost an incredible Bravery, they were forc'd to quit their Fastnesses, and retire from the Field of Battel, leaving several Cannon, Prisoners and Standards behind them. And tho the Victory was disputed by the Enemy, yet it plainly appear'd to be on our side, by the immediate laying Siege to *Mons*, and carrying it in spite of all Opposition. *All this is the Lord's Doing, and it should be marvellous in our Eyes.*

And now concerning this glorious, tho bloody Victory, which was disputed with so much Obstinacy, and

gain'd with so much Valour : What can be better spoken in commendation of the Bravery of our Troops in general, or what greater Encomiums can be given to our Generals and Officers in particular, than the Enemy unwittingly bestow upon them? For if, as they acknowledge, their Troops did their Duty all extremely well, if they gave signal proofs by the hazards they run, and the furious resistance they made, that they had recover'd their antient Courage: If they fought more like Lions than Men: If every Officer and Soldier distinguish'd himself, by striving to outdo each other: And if they all did Wonders, as they boasted; what Wonders then did they do, who beat these Wonder-working Troops out of their Fastnesses, ferreted them out of their strong Holds, drove them from Intrenchment to Intrenchment, and at last forc'd them out of the Field with prodigious Slaughter and Disgrace, in spite of their wonderful Numbers, their wonderful Strength, their wonderful Doings and Courage? Yet for all this we will be so far from glorying, that we humbly and admiringly ascribe it to the Lord of Hosts; and in token of Gratitude for the same let us joyfully sing, *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.* But then let us now consider,

III. The Motive those Mercies are to Joy. The reception of such extraordinary Favours does dispose the Soul to it; 'tis a Motive so enforcing, that it powerfully and irresistibly effects it, by removing the Contraries that are Obstacles thereunto, viz. Fear, Sorrow and Uneasiness. A hazardous doubtful War with restless implacable Adversaries, who envy our Felicity, and seek to bring about our Destruction in Church and State by all possible ways and means, cannot but excite Fear, and Pain, and Uneasiness in us about the Event; because all that is truly valuable to us in this World, is hereby in danger, and intirely lost if the Enemy prevail, and only secure as we are victorious. Now that which delivers us from those Fears and Dangers, and secures and establishes us in the peaceful and uninterrupted possession

possession of our Religion, Lives, Liberties and Properties, must needs (except we are Stocks, and incapable of such a Passion) afford us Joy; for by a mighty efficacy it disposes thereunto, and delights and pleases all the Affections of the Soul.

Now that which produceth this delightsom and happy Temper of Soul, is the Sense of Mercies receiv'd, and Victories gain'd over malicious Foes, who unjustly quarrel with us, and fight against us to enrich themselves in our Ruin, and to raise and enlarge the Fabrick of universal Servitude upon the Ruins of Liberty and Property. And can any one who has a sense of these things, refrain from being glad? Can he chuse but rejoice, who sees Heaven espouse the injur'd Cause of his Country, and mightily vindicating it in the Overthrow of her Enemies? Can any forbear being glad, when the matter of his Fears and Terrors is remov'd, and the good News of his Countrymens Welfare and Success comes repeated in his Ears? Nay, can we be otherwise than glad, when we consider that by these repeated Mercies our Strength and Courage is as it were redoubled, and that of the Enemy in proportion broken and diminish'd? When we see hereby our Cause is more and more supported, our Religion, Liberties and Properties at present secur'd, and that hereby we have a pleasing Prospect of securing them down to future Generations? And moreover, is it not ground of much Joy, to behold Tyranny and Oppression, the deadly Enemies of Mankind, receive a mortal Wound by the victorious Arms of Union and Property, and languishing of an incurable Disease? And by those Mercies and Advantages God has blest us with, what a beautiful Prospect have we in view, of finishing this War with Honour, of the Progress of the Gospel in the World, of the Resurrection of foreign Churches, which have been bury'd by Persecution and Oppression, of the Establishment of Christian Liberty, of having a flourishing Trade, and of being a happy, peaceful, and wealthy People? Surely no good Protestant and Englishman can resist the force of such Motives as these; it must needs produce a

holy and joyful Temper of Spirit; and fill him with Joy unspeakable, and constrain him with a rais'd Heart and Affection to be very grateful to the Author of them, and in consort with others to sing, *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.* But to the great wonder of all good Men, there are jarring Strings in our Harps, there are those among us who can relish nothing that is truly grateful and savory herein, to constrain them to harmonize with their joyful Brethren: Tho at the same time all these Successes and Mercies are to the apparent Welfare of the Kingdom in general, as well as for the Protestant Interest in particular. 'Tis undeniably evident, that such as are chagrin and sad, who bite the Lip, and hang the Head, and fret at the victorious Arms of our glorious Queen, which now triumph over Injustice, Cruelty and Oppression, and have no Hearts to rejoice in the Prosperity of the present Establishment, wherein Justice and Law has its free course, and is impartially executed, Religion, Liberty and Property is secur'd and encourag'd, the innocent protected, and only the Vicious and Guilty discountenanc'd, do openly betray themselves, and too palpably discover, that their Inclinations and Hearts do center in a foreign Prince, whom the Nation, in joint concurrence with Heaven, hath rejected with abhorrence; for so it plainly appears by the Votes of Parliament, and by the prosperous issue of that Attempt when he came to invade us. Without saying what is worse, such Persons do truly merit our Pity and Contempt: our Pity, in that they are so miserably blinded to their own Happiness and Felicity; and Contempt, in that notwithstanding their assisting the common Enemy with their united Prayers and Policies, our good God hath given us these Mercies and Deliverances without them. Let us now make some Application.

Hath the Almighty God bless'd us with fresh matter of Joy, to be rejoic'd in, in giving us such great Success abroad? Then let us, as the Day calls for it, give

give him new Praise. Every new Mercy requires a new Thanksgiving ; the multiplication of God's Favours to us should be answer'd by our additional Praises to him : we should take special care of slighting and neglecting Benefits receiv'd, for fear of enlarging our Ingratitude, which at last may increase our Debt above our Ability to discharge, and so prove matter of as much Sorrow, as God's Mercies, we now commemorate and celebrate, are of present Joy. As none of us are surfeited with the too liberal Dispensings of God's Providences, so neither let us be wanting in our free and ingenuous Acknowledgments. As we count nothing too much we receiv'd from God, so neither should we be content and rest satisfy'd to render a little to God. As his undeserv'd Mercies are above our Merit, so should they be preserv'd in our Esteem, and improv'd for the Honour and Glory of the Giver. As we find to our unspeakable Joy, that he is not weary of communicating his good things to us ; so neither should we be weary of returning our best Thanks to him : but our Hearts and Souls should be always dispos'd and ready to receive his inestimable Mercies, with humble Reverence and Admiration. For this is the effectual way to engage the Heart and Hand of God always in our Protection and Safety, to induce him to regard our low Estate, continually to espouse our Quarrel, to vindicate our Injuries, to rebuke and scourge more and more our Enemies, and to exalt us upon a Mountain of Prosperity, there to be at rest and secure from all the Attempts of our malicious Adversaries.

The Sense of God's exceeding bountiful Providence towards us, in the Mercies we enjoy and now commemorate, should awaken the Powers of our Souls, and engage, unite and stir them up to the highest pitch, and constrain us chearfully to sing with the Divine Psalmist, saying, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his Holy Name ! Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits !* Psal. 103. 1, 2. Such Praises very well become the Lips of all Protestants in this Kingdom, who by so many admirable turns of Providence,

dence, and miraculous Deliverances, are in present Safety, having surviv'd and escap'd the most dangerous and dismal Calamities, which once we had too much reason to believe and fear were inevitable. Now what is owing to our Almighty Deliverer for this? As our Deliverances are wonderful, so should we, in praise of our God, admirably say with the Psalmist, *If it had not been the Lord who was on our Side, when Men rose up against us, then they had swallow'd us up quick, when their Wrath was kindled against us; then the Waters had overwhelm'd us, the Stream had gone over our Soul. Blessed be God who hath not given us a Prey to their Teeth: our Soul is escap'd as a Bird out of the Snare of the Fowlers, the Snare is broken, and we are escap'd.* Psal. 124. 2, 3, 4, &c. But then,

Lastly, Let not our present Successes, how great soever they be, make us secure and fearless of future Dangers. The Successes already attending us, tho of the first magnitude, are not infallible Presages of future Advantages. We should consider that the Issues of all things are in the hands of Almighty God, and absolutely at his disposal; and that what in Mercy and Kindness he gives to day, upon just Provocation in Anger he may remove to morrow. Mercies are forfeited by Sin and Ingratitude, and are no otherwise continu'd than they are improv'd; for God engages himself by Promise to give temporal Deliverance to his People, no further, and upon no other terms, than they are dutiful and obedient: as in that memorable Covenant, *If his Children forsake my Laws and Statutes, and keep not my Commandments, then will I visit their Transgression with the Rod, and their Iniquity with Stripes,* Psal. 89. 30, 31, 32. The only way to insure our selves in God's Protection, in order to secure and enlarge our present Advantages, is to be grateful and dutiful, to walk worthy of those Mercies which are bestow'd upon us; to see that our holy Hearts and obedient Lives do suit with and answer both the Dignity of our Profession, and the Greatness of our Deliverance. This is what the great *Jehovah* waits for and expects of us, and this is what

what the Mercies themselves do merit and call for, and which a pious grateful People will conscientiously regard, and readily, chearfully, humbly and constantly yield : For being deliver'd out of the hands of their Enemies, what else should they do, but serve their Almighty Redeemer without fear, in Holiness and Righteousness before him, all the Days of their Lives ? This is the effectual way to secure and improve our present Advantages, and to engage the Heart and Hand of God in the liberal distribution of his future Favours upon us ; and never to forsake us, until he hath subdu'd all Enemies under our Feet. Let us ardently pray for the precious Life of our pious Queen, that God would add to her Days many Years, and give her the Necks of her Enemies, and long continue her a publick Blessing to the Protestants in general all the World over.

Let us beseech him to continue to her and her Allies, his gracious Assistance, Blessing and Protection, in order to finish and bring to an end this hazardous bloody War, which they have so generously undertaken, and hitherto so happily carried on with much Success and Glory. May the Blessing of the Allwise and Powerful God attend the great Council of the Nation, and dispose them to consult the real Felicity of the Kingdom, and make them unanimous in finding out ways and means, not only to carry on this necessary War, by enabling her Majesty, in conjunction with her Allies, to maintain the Conquest already made, but to make greater in case the Enemy continue obstinate ; and also for the ease of the Poor at home. May her Counsellors and Generals be always faithful and valiant, and their Enterprizes successful ; and God grant that the ensuing Year may prove, what her Majesty seems to predict in her Speech from the Throne to both Houses of Parliament, that they may now put the last hand to the finishing this bloody War. May our gracious Queen prove a true Prophetess in this respect ; and what is wanting on Earth to compleat the same, may be made good by the extraordinary Succours of Heaven. May the Enemy be thus near his Downfal, and the injur'd
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and oppress'd Princes near their Restoration; and especially may our distress'd persecuted Brethren in *France*, and all the World over, be ~~then~~ near their Redemption: and may it be as sudden as 'twill be joyful, yea as sudden as 'twas to the Church of *Israel*; and in gratitude for the same may they so quickly have occasion to sing with them in our Text, *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.*



FINIS.

